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Remarks:

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divisional application to the application mentioned
under INID code 62.

(54) **Tablet comprising a phosphate-binding polymer**

(57) A tablet containing a phosphate-binding polymer, which has an average particle size of 400 μm or less, contains particles of 500 μm or less in particle size at a ratio of 90% or more and has a moisture content of 1 to 14%, together with crystalline cellulose and/or low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose, and a process for producing the same are disclosed.

The phosphate-binding polymer tablet according to

the present invention contains the active component at a high ratio, is excellent in the ability to bind to phosphate and are quickly disintegration in an acidic to a neutral region while being little affected by the stirring strength. Accordingly, it is an excellent preparation capable of regulating changes in bioavailability due to the gastrointestinal motions and pH value.

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Description**TECHNICAL FIELD**

[0001] This invention relates to a tablet containing a phosphate-binding polymer. More particularly, it relates to the tablet containing a phosphate-binding polymer, which has an average particle size of 400 μm or less, contains particles of 500 μm or less in particle size at a ratio of 90% or more and has a moisture content of 1 to 14%, together with crystalline cellulose and/or low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose, and showing a rapid disintegration, dispersibility and an ability to bind to phosphate, and a process for producing the same.

BACKGROUND ART

[0002] Phosphate-binding polymers, which are non-absorptive polymers capable of adsorbing phosphate, are useful as remedies for hyperphosphatemia induced by renal hypofunction such as renal insufficiency. As described in, for example, U.S. Patent No. 5496545, phosphate-binding polymers are publicly known as cationic polymer compounds comprising primary and secondary amines which are prepared by crosslinking polyallyamine with the use of a crosslinking agent such as epichlorohydrin.

[0003] With respect to phosphate-binding polymer preparations as remedies for hyperphosphatemia, for example, U.S. Patent No. 5496545 points out that tablets can be produced by using various additives including crystalline cellulose. However, the patent cited above presents no particular example of such preparations. Although the present inventors attempted in practice to produce tablets by blending various additives with the phosphate-binding polymer obtained by the method as described in the above patent, no tablet could be successfully produced thereby.

[0004] Moreover, known adsorbents for oral administration, for example, a calcium polystyrene sulfonate preparation (KalimateTM manufactured by Nikken Chemicals Co., Ltd.), a sodium polystyrene sulfonate preparation (KayexalateTM manufactured by Torii & Co., Ltd.), an adsorptive carbon preparation (KremezinTM manufactured by Kureha Chemical Industry Co., Ltd.), a cholestyramine preparation (QuestranTM, manufactured by Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.) and a precipitated calcium carbonate preparation (manufactured by Emisu Yakuhin K.K.), are all in dosage forms of bulk powders, powder preparations or capsules containing powders. Namely, there has been reported no example of preparations of this type in the form of tablets so far.

[0005] When orally administered, phosphate-binding polymers adsorb phosphorus in foods followed by excretion into the feces to thereby inhibit the absorption of phosphorus via the digestive tracts, thus regulating the phosphorus concentration in the blood. These phosphate-binding polymers are taken in a relatively large single dose, i.e., from 1 to 2 g. Because of reacting with water and thus swelling rapidly, the phosphate-binding polymers can be hardly taken as such.

[0006] Patients with dialysis to whom the phosphate-binding polymers are to be administered as remedies for hyperphosphatemia are frequently under restriction in water intake. It is therefore required to develop phosphate-binding polymer preparations which can be taken with a small amount of water. One of the promising dosage forms is tablets which can be small-sized by compression, in particular, coated tablets which would not disintegrate in the mouth and can be smoothly ingested. When processed into tablets by compressing, however, a phosphate-binding polymer alone gives only a poor tablet hardness and thus cannot be processed as such into a tablet preparation. Due to the high hygroscopicity and swelling properties of the phosphate-binding polymer, it is also impossible to produce a phosphate-binding polymer preparation by the wet granulation method with the use of water or a binder solution containing alcohols, etc. followed by drying.

[0007] To overcome these problems, it has been required to develop a production process which comprises blending a powdery phosphate-binding polymer with powdery additives having excellent molding characteristics and compressing the obtained mixture. Such a preparation should be designed by taking into consideration changes in the disintegration properties and dispersibility accompanying the compression. Since a phosphate-binding polymer is to be taken in a relatively large single dose, special regard should be paid to give a preparation with a high content of the active component.

[0008] Although the present inventors attempted to produce phosphate-binding polymer preparations in the form of tablets by using various additives described in U.S. Patent No. 5496545, they could not produce any favorable tablets which contain phosphate-binding polymer having a sufficient hardness, a rapid disintegrative dispersibility and an ability to bind to phosphate.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

[0009] Under these circumstances, the present inventors have conducted intensive studies to solve the above-mentioned problems. As a result, they have successfully found that a phosphate-binding polymer tablet which contains a

large amount of the phosphate-binding polymer, has a sufficient hardness and shows rapid disintegrative dispersibility and an ability to bind to phosphate can be obtained by adding specific additives to a phosphate-binding polymer which has certain characteristics, thus completing the present invention. More particularly speaking, they have found that a tablet, which contains a phosphate-binding polymer having an average particle size of 400 μm or less, preferably 250 μm or less, containing particles of 500 μm or less, preferably 300 μm or less, in size at a ratio of 90% or more and having a moisture content of 1 to 14%, together with crystalline cellulose and/or low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose, has excellent characteristics.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010]

Fig. 1 provides a graph which shows a relationship between the moisture content of the phosphate-binding polymer and the tablet hardness in Example 2.

Fig. 2 provides a graph which shows a relationship between the moisture content of the phosphate-binding polymer and the disintegration time of the tablet in Example 2.

Fig. 3 provides a graph which shows a relationship between the moisture content of the phosphate-binding polymer and the tablet hardness in Example 3.

Fig. 4 provides a graph which shows a relationship between the moisture content of the phosphate-binding polymer and the disintegration time of the tablet in Example 3.

Fig. 5 provides a graph which shows the disintegration properties (i.e., a relationship between the strokes of the disintegration tester and the tablet hardness) of the phosphate-binding polymer preparation in Example 4.

Fig. 6 provides a graph which shows the phosphate-binding profile of the phosphate-binding polymer preparation in Example 5.

MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

[0011] As the phosphate-binding polymer to be employed in the present invention, use can be made of, for example, one prepared by grinding the dry phosphate-binding polymer obtained by the method disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5496545 so as to give a ground material having an average particle size of 400 μm or less, preferably 250 μm or less, and containing particles of 500 μm or less, preferably 300 μm or less, in size at a ratio of 90% or more, and then further regulating the moisture content thereof to 1 to 14%. Among phosphate-binding polymers, a crosslinked polymer obtained by treating polyallylamine with epichlorohydrin is particularly suitable in the present invention.

[0012] It is not preferable that the average particle size of the phosphate-binding polymer exceeds 400 μm , since a sufficient hardness to give tablets can be hardly achieved in this case. When the moisture content of the phosphate-binding polymer is less than 1%, it is also impossible to obtain a sufficient hardness to give tablets and thus the tablet surface is liable to be abraded. When the moisture content thereof exceeds 14%, on the other hand, a sufficient hardness can be achieved. In this case, however, the resultant tablets undergo plastic deformation; which makes them inadequate as a medicinal preparation. To obtain tablets with improved administration properties, it is necessary to impart such surface strength to the tablets as to give a hardness of 6 KP or more (measured with a tablet hardness tester) and a weight loss of 1% or less in an friability test (100 revolutions). Moreover, the tablets should not undergo plastic deformation. To satisfy these requirements, it is required that the moisture content of the polymer falls within a range of 1 to 14%. The expression "a moisture content of 1 to 14%" as used herein means that after drying at 105°C for 16 hours, the weight is reduced by 1 to 14%. It is preferable that the drying weight loss ranges from 2 to 14%. When the phosphate-binding polymer per se absorbs moisture in the course of grinding to give a moisture content of 1 to 14%, the phosphate-binding polymer may be used in the tablets of the present invention as such without regulating the moisture content any more.

[0013] The phosphate-binding polymer may be ground with an arbitrary apparatus without restriction, so long as a particle size of 500 μm or less and the average particle size as defined above can be achieved thereby. For example, use may be made of an impact grinder therefor.

[0014] The moisture content may be regulated by using a moisture-controlling agent, for example, a saturated aqueous solution of sodium chloride (25°C, relative humidity 75.3%), a saturated aqueous solution of calcium chloride (25°C, relative humidity 84.3%), a saturated aqueous solution of magnesium nitrate (25°C, relative humidity 52.8%), etc. or allowing the polymer to spontaneously absorb the moisture in the atmosphere. It is also possible to prepare the phosphate-binding polymer in such a manner as to give a moisture content within the range of 1 to 14% to thereby provide the polymer with the desired moisture content.

[0015] Although the crystalline cellulose to be used in the present invention is not particularly restricted, use may be made therefor of one showing a weight loss of 7% or less after drying at 105°C for 3 hours. It is preferable to use

marketed products, for example, Avicel™ PH101, PH102, PH301, PH302, etc. (manufactured by Asahi Chemical Industry Co., Ltd.) either alone or as a mixture thereof.

[0016] The low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose to be used in the present invention means one having a degree of substitution by hydroxypropoxyl group ($-\text{OC}_3\text{H}_6\text{OH}$) of 5.0 to 16.0% by weight. As a low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose, it is preferable to use marketed products such as LH-11, LH-21, LH-31, etc. (manufactured by Shin-Etsu Chemical Co., Ltd.) either alone or as a mixture thereof.

[0017] The amounts of the crystalline cellulose and/or the low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose to be used in the phosphate-binding polymer tablet according to the present invention may be arbitrarily determined by taking the dose of the phosphate-binding polymer as an oral preparation and the administration properties of the preparation into consideration. In a preferable embodiment, for example, the crystalline cellulose and/or the low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose are used in an amount of 10% by weight or more, preferably 30% by weight or more, based on the phosphate-binding polymer which has an average particle size of 250 μm or less, contains particles of 300 μm or less in size at a ratio of 90% or more and has a moisture content of 1 to 14%. When both of the crystalline cellulose and the low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose are added, it is preferable that the sum of the contents of these components is 10% by weight or more, preferably 30% by weight or more. From the viewpoint of the administration properties, etc. of the preparation, the upper limit of the content of the crystalline cellulose and/or the low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose is from 50 to 200% by weight.

[0018] Since the phosphate-binding polymer and the crystalline cellulose or the low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose have highly frictional natures, it is recommended to use a hydrogenated oil in the step of the continuous tableting so as to relieve the load due to the rubbing between the blend and the punch of a tableting machine. As the hydrogenated oil, use may be made of a marketed product such as Lubriwax™ manufactured by Freund Industrial Co., Ltd..

[0019] The phosphate-binding polymer tablet according to the present invention can be produced by blending the phosphate-binding polymer with the crystalline cellulose and/or low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose together with fillers (lactose, sucrose, mannitol, etc.), lubricants (magnesium stearate, polyethylene glycol, etc.), other additives conventionally employed in the art, perfumes, coloring agents, etc. followed by tableting.

[0020] The phosphate-binding polymer tablet according to the present invention may be further processed into a film-coated tablet by coating the surface thereof with a film. In the film-coating, use may be made of water-soluble film bases such as hydroxypropylmethylcellulose and acrylic copolymers. It is particularly preferable to use hydroxypropylmethylcellulose therefor.

[0021] To further illustrate the present invention in greater detail, the following Examples and Referential Example will be given. However, it is to be understood that the present invention is not restricted thereto.

Referential Example

[0022] Epichlorohydrin was added as a crosslinking agent to polyallylamine and crosslinking polymerization was carried out to give a cationic phosphate-binding polymer wherein the primary amine (81.2% by mol) and the secondary amine (18.1% by mol) formed hydrochlorides at a ratio of about 40%. The obtained polymer was vacuum-dried to give a dry powder. This dry powder of the phosphate-binding polymer was ground by using a Fitz Mill (Model M5A manufactured by Fitzpatrick) and thus a moisture-containing phosphate-binding polymer (moisture content: 3.6%, ratio of particles of 300 μm or less in size: 99.7%) was obtained.

Example 1

[0023] To 150 mg of the moisture-containing phosphate-binding polymer obtained in the above Referential Example, either crystalline cellulose (Avicel™ PH101 manufactured by Asahi Chemical Industry Co., Ltd.) or low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose (L-HPC LH31 manufactured by Shin-Etsu Chemical Co., Ltd.) was added in an amount of 150 mg, i.e., 100% by weight based on the weight of the phosphate-binding polymer. The obtained mixture was compressed under a static pressure (500 kg, 1,000 kg or 1500 kg) to give a tablet (diameter: 10 mm) weighing 300 mg. For comparison, 150 mg of the moisture-containing phosphate-binding polymer was blended 150 mg of one additive selected from among lactose (200M DMV), mannitol (manufactured by Kyowa Hakko Kogyo Co., Ltd.), methylcellulose (Methocel™ SM-15 manufactured by Shin-Etsu Chemical Co., Ltd.), talc (manufactured by Kihara Kasei), hydroxypropylcellulose (HPC-L manufactured by Nippon Soda Co., Ltd.), hydroxypropylmethylcellulose 2910 (HPMC TC-5-RW manufactured by Shin-Etsu Chemical Co., Ltd.), carmellose calcium (ECG-505™ manufactured by Gotoku Yakuhi). The obtained mixture was compressed under a static pressure (500 kg, 1,000 kg or 1500 kg) to give a tablet (diameter: 10 mm) weighing 300 mg. Further, 300 mg of the moisture-containing phosphate-binding polymer was compressed under a static pressure to give a control tablet.

[0024] The hardness of each tablet thus obtained was measured with a hardness tester (Pharmatest). Also, tablets showing a hardness of 6 KP or more at a compression pressure of 1,000 kg were tested by using a disintegration tester

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(manufactured by Toyama Sangyo) with the use of water as a test fluid. Table 1 summarizes the results.

Table 1

Additive	Tablet hardness (KP) (compression pressure: kg)			Disintegration 1000 kg (min)
	500	1000	1500	
crystalline cellulose	9.4	17.7	24.1	0.5
L-HPC	5.4	11.4	17.1	10.5
lactose	0.7	1.8	3.3	22.3
mannitol	0.4	1.2	2.0	
methylcellulose	10.2	20.0	24.4	
talc	0.2	0.4	0.6	
HPC-L	13.3	22.6	25.1	> 30
HPMC	4.8	10.1	13.9	> 30
ECG-505	1.3	5.0	9.2	
(control)	0.5	1.5	3.3	

[0025] As Table 1 shows, the tablets showing hardness exceeding 6 KP and disintegration time not longer than 15 minutes could be obtained by using crystalline cellulose or low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose (L-HPC).

Example 2

[0026] The moisture-containing phosphate-binding polymer obtained in the above Referential Example was dried at 105°C for 16 hours to give a dry phosphate-binding polymer powder (moisture content: less than 0.1%). In a desiccator, this dry powder was allowed to absorb moisture with the use of a saturated aqueous solution of sodium chloride as a moisture-controlling agent so as to prepare phosphate-binding polymers with moisture contents of 1.1 to 16.4%.

[0027] 200 mg of each of these phosphate-binding polymers differing in moisture content was blended with 100 mg of crystalline cellulose (50% by weight based on the phosphate-binding polymer) and the resultant mixture was compressed under a static pressure of 1,000 kg to give a tablet (diameter: 10 mm) weighing 300 mg.

[0028] For comparison, 300 mg of each these phosphate-binding polymers differing in moisture content was compressed under a static pressure of 1,000 kg to give a tablet (diameter: 10 mm) weighing 300 mg.

[0029] The hardness of each tablet thus obtained was measured with a hardness tester. Fig. 1 shows the results. Moreover, tablets showing hardness of about 6 KP were each subjected to a friability test by revolving 100 times with the use of a friability tester (25 rpm, 4 minutes) and then the weight loss was determined. Table 2 summarizes the results.

Table 2

Tablet composition	Moisture content in phosphate-binding polymer	Tablet hardness (KP)	Friability (wt.loss:%)
phosphate-binding polymer 300 mg	6.1%	8.0	3.6
phosphate-binding polymer 200 mg crystalline cellulose 100 mg	1.1%	7.9	0.7
phosphate-binding polymer 200 mg crystalline cellulose 100 mg	< 0.1%	5.6	1.6

[0030] As Figs. 1 and 2, and Table 2 show, the tablet produced by comprising the phosphate-binding polymer alone could not achieve sufficient hardness (6 KP or more) at a moisture content of 5% or less. Although the tablet with a moisture content of 6.1% showed a hardness of 8 KP, the friability exceeded the allowable level (weight loss: 1% or less) specified in United States Pharmacopoeia. That is to say, it had a poor surface strength. In the tablets produced by compressing the phosphate-binding polymer containing 9% or more moisture alone, the disintegration time was prolonged with an increase in the tablet hardness. The tablets with moisture content of 16% or more suffered from plastic deformation, thus showing inadequate tablet properties. When the phosphate-binding polymer was blended with crystalline cellulose, in contrast thereto, a sufficient hardness and tablet surface strength were observed and rapid

disintegration (disintegration time: about 1 minute) was achieved within a moisture content range of 1 to 14%.

Example 3

[0031] The moisture-containing phosphate-binding polymer obtained in the above Referential Example was sieved by using a sonic shifter (manufactured by Seishin Kigyo) through 60 mesh (250 μ m), 80 mesh (180 μ m), 150 mesh (106 μ m) and 270 mesh (53 μ m) sieves to give a phosphate-binding polymer of 250 μ m or more in average particle size, one of from 180 to 250 μ m in average particle size, one of from 106 to 180 μ m in average particle size, one of from 53 to 106 μ m in average particle size and one of 53 μ m or less in average particle size.

[0032] To 200 mg of each of these phosphate-binding polymers differing in average particle size, 100 mg of crystalline cellulose (50% by weight based on the weight of the phosphate-binding polymer) was added and the obtained mixture was compressed under a static pressure of 1,000 kg to give a tablet (diameter: 10 mm) weighing 300 mg.

[0033] For comparison, 300 mg of each of the phosphate-binding polymers differing in average particle size was compressed alone under a static pressure of 1,000 kg to give a tablet (diameter: 10 mm) weighing 300 mg.

[0034] Fig. 3 shows the results of the measurement of the hardness of each tablet thus obtained with a hardness tester, while Fig. 4 shows the results of the determination of the disintegration time thereof (test fluid: water).

[0035] As Figs. 3 and 4 show, none of the tablets produced by compressing the phosphate-binding polymers alone could achieve a sufficient hardness (6 KP or more). When crystalline cellulose was added to the phosphate-binding polymers, in contrast thereto, the hardness was elevated with a decrease in the average particle size. A sufficient hardness and rapid disintegration were established at an average particle size of 250 μ m or less.

Example 4

[0036] 200 g of the moisture-containing phosphate-binding polymer obtained in the above Referential Example was blended with 97.6 g of crystalline cellulose and 2.4 g of magnesium stearate (manufactured by Nitto Kasei) employed as a lubricant. The obtained mixture was compressed by using a rotary tableting machine (Model HT-P18A manufactured by Hata Iron Worker) under a pressure of 2,000 kg to give tablets (uncoated) of 9.5 mm in diameter each weighing 300 mg and containing 200 mg of the phosphate-binding polymer.

[0037] When measured with a hardness tester (a contestor), these tablets showed a tablet hardness of 7.7 KP.

[0038] Further, the uncoated tablet containing 200 mg of the phosphate-binding polymer was coated with a film comprising 8.25 mg of hydroxypropylmethylcellulose 2910 (HPMC TC-5-MW manufactured by Shin-Etsu Chemical Co., Ltd.), 1.26 mg of polyethylene glycol 6000 (manufactured by Nippon Oil and Fats Co., Ltd.), 1.8 mg of titanium oxide (A-100 manufactured by Ishihara Sangyo Co., Ltd.) and 0.69 mg of talc by using a coating machine (Dria Coater Model DRC-500 manufactured by Powrex Corporation) to give a film-coated tablet preparation.

[0039] The film-coated tablets thus obtained were tested by using a disintegration tester at 5 to 30 strokes per minute with the use of two test fluids (pH 1.2: official liquid 1, specified in "Japanese Pharmacopoeia", water). Fig. 5 shows the results.

[0040] As Fig. 5 shows, the phosphate-binding polymer preparation containing crystalline cellulose was rapidly disintegrated within the acidic to neutral region while scarcely affected by the stirring strength (stroke).

Example 5

[0041] To evaluate the drug effects, 5 uncoated tablets and 5 film-coated tablets, each containing 200 mg of the phosphate-binding polymer, prepared in Example 4 were examined in the ability to bind to phosphate in 200 ml of a test fluid which had been prepared by dissolving 4.7 g of sodium chloride, 21.3 g of N,N-bis(2-hydroxyethyl)-2-aminoethanesulfonic acid and 0.544 g of potassium dihydrogenphosphate in water, regulating the pH value to 7 and heating to 37°C, while rotating puddles at 100 rpm. The ability to bind to phosphate was evaluated by monitoring the residual phosphate concentration in the test fluid with the passage of time throughout the process of the disintegration of the tablets, dispersion of the phosphate-binding polymer and adsorption of phosphate. The initial phosphate concentration in the test fluid and the one at the completion of the adsorption are referred to respectively as 1 and 0. Fig. 6 shows the results.

[0042] As Fig. 6 shows, the phosphate-binding polymer preparations containing crystalline cellulose were able to rapidly bind to phosphate.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

[0043] The phosphate-binding polymer tablet according to the present invention contains the active component at a high ratio, has excellent ability to bind to phosphate and undergoes rapid disintegration within an acidic to neutral

region while scarcely affected by the stirring strength. Accordingly, it is an excellent preparation capable of regulating changes in bioavailability due to the gastrointestinal motions and pH value.

5 **Claims**

1. A tablet comprising a phosphate-binding polymer, which has a hardness of 6 KP or more, and a disintegration time of 15 minutes or less.

10 2. The tablet as claimed in claim 1, which further has a weight loss of 1 % or less when subjected to friability testing.

3. The tablet as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the hardness of said tablet is measured with a tablet hardness tester.

15 4. The tablet as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the disintegration time of said tablet is measured with a disintegration tester with the use of water as a test fluid.

5. The tablet as claimed in any of claim 1 to 4, wherein the weight loss of said tablet is measured with a friability tester (25 rpm, 4 minutes) by revolving 100 times.

20 6. The tablet as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5, wherein said phosphate-binding polymer is a polymer obtained by crosslinking polyallylamine with epichlorohydrin.

25 7. The tablet as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6, which further contains crystalline cellulose and/or low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose.

8. The tablet as claimed in claim 7, wherein the content of crystalline cellulose and/or low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose is 10 % by weight or more based on the weight of said phosphate-binding polymer.

30 9. The tablet as claimed in claim 7 or 8, wherein said low substituted hydroxypropylcellulose has a degree of hydroxypropoxyl-substitution of from 5.0 to 16.0 % by weight.

10. The tablet as claimed in claim 7, 8 or 9, which further contains a hydrogenated oil.

35 11. The tablet as claimed in any of claims 1 to 10, which is further surface-coated with a water-soluble film base.

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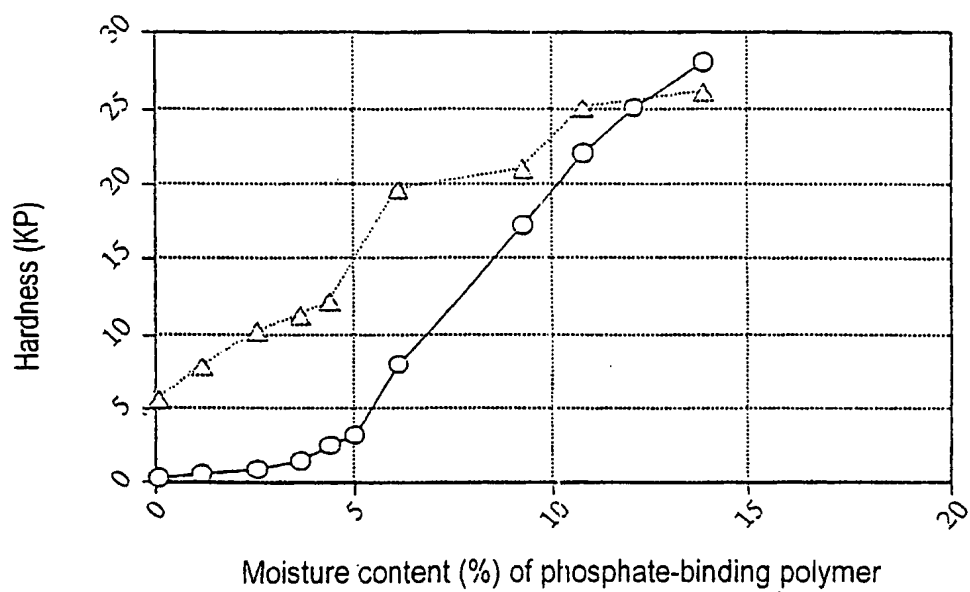
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Fig. 1

Relationship between moisture content of phosphate-binding polymer and tablet hardness



- 300 mg of phosphate-binding polymer
- △--- 200 mg of phosphate-binding polymer + 100 mg of crystalline cellulose

Fig. 2

Relationship between moisture content of phosphate-binding polymer and disintegration time

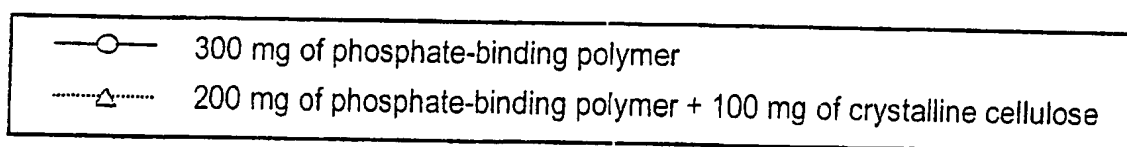
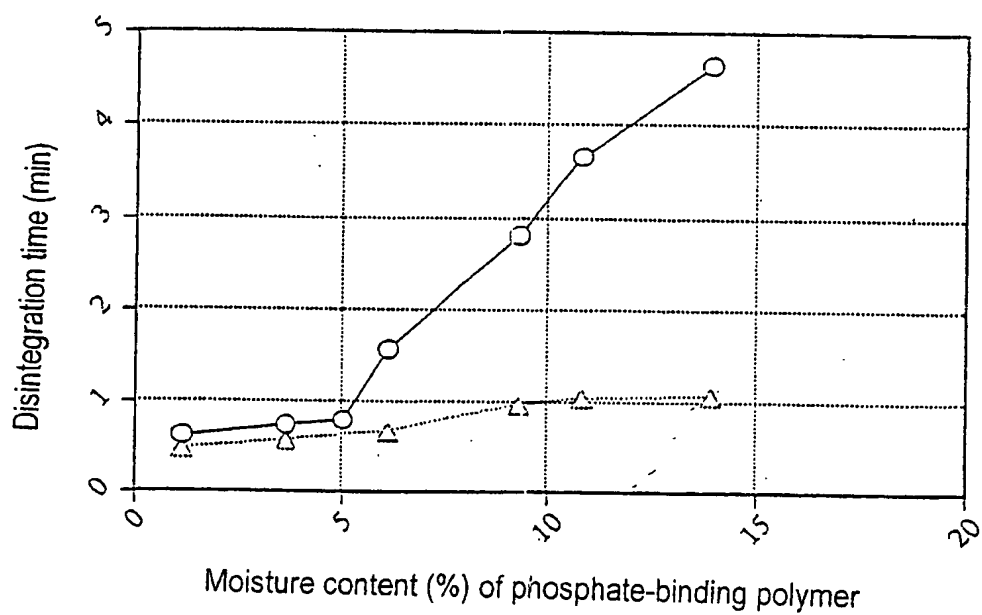
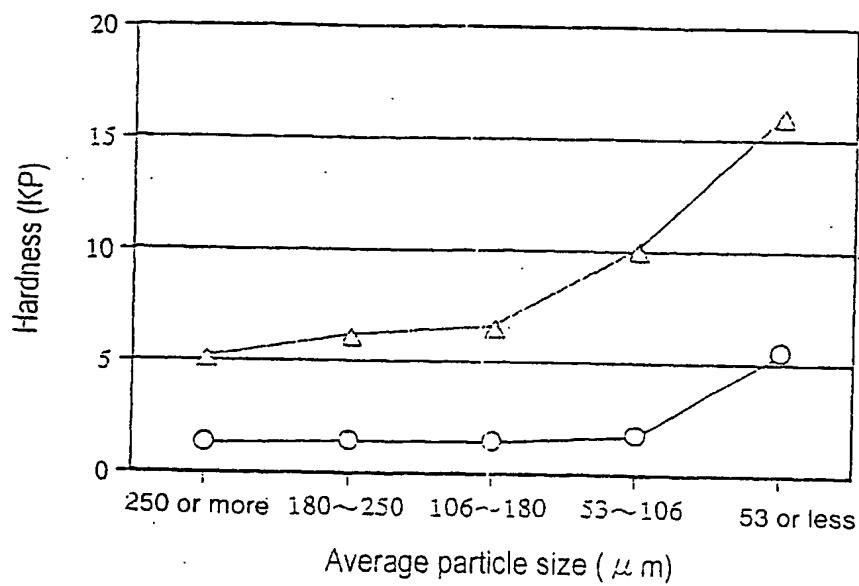


Fig. 3.

Relationship between average particle size of phosphate-binding polymer and tablet hardness



- 300 mg of phosphate-binding polymer
- -△- - 200 mg of phosphate-binding polymer + 100 mg of crystalline cellulose

Fig. 4

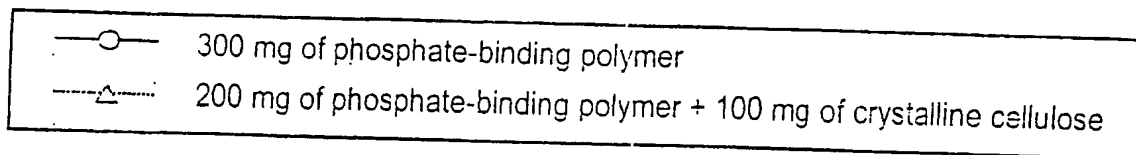
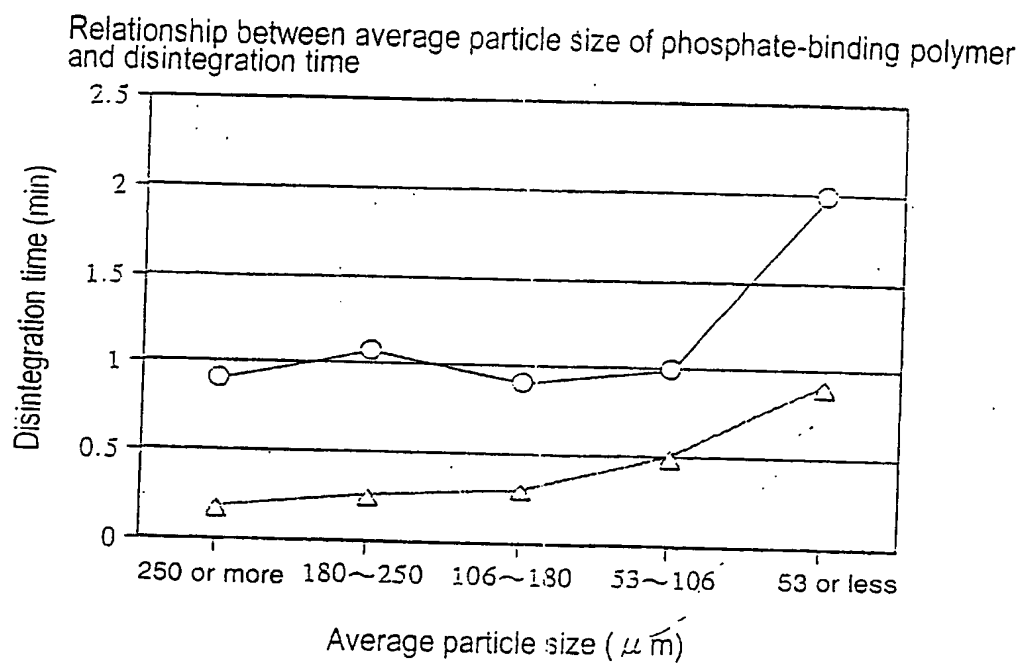


Fig. 5

Disintegration properties of phosphate-binding polymer preparation
Relationship between frequency of stroke and disintegration time

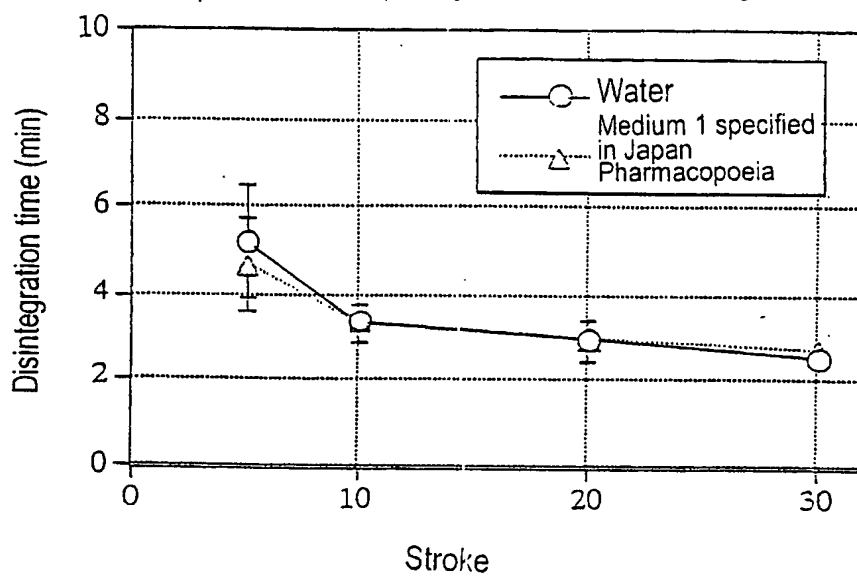
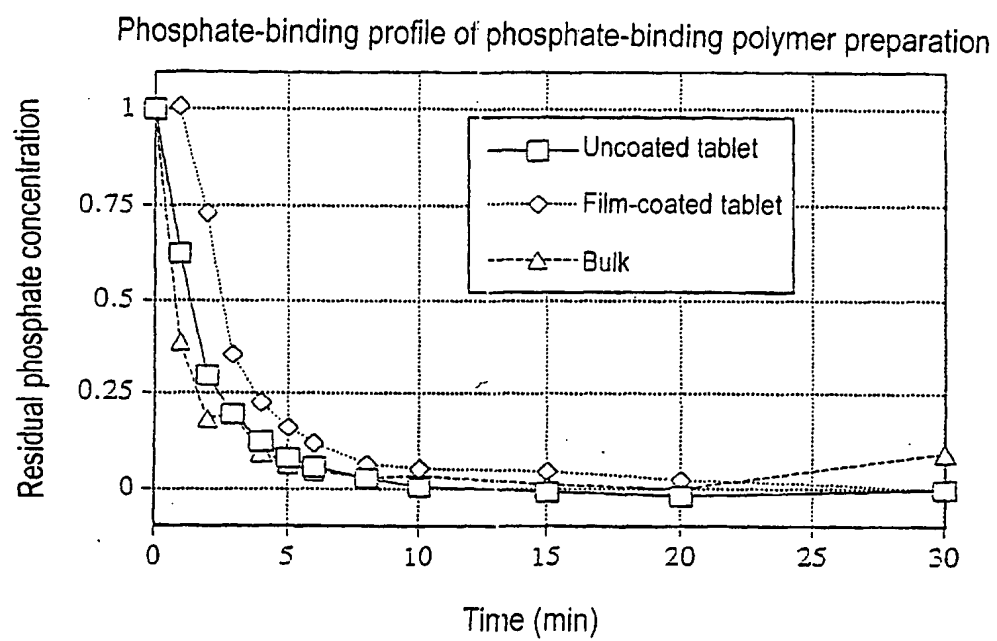
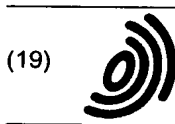


Fig. 6



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PARTIAL EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

which under Rule 45 of the European Patent Convention EP 02 02 5683
shall be considered, for the purposes of subsequent
proceedings, as the European search report

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
X	WO 96 39156 A (GELTEX PHARMACEUTICALS INC.) 12 December 1996 (1996-12-12) * claims 1-7 * * page 36, line 10 - line 34 * * page 37, line 10 - line 30 * ---	1-11	A61K9/20 A61K31/785
X	WO 96 21454 A (GELTEX PHARMACEUTICALS INC.) 18 July 1996 (1996-07-18) * claims 1-34 * * page 34, line 14 - page 35, line 24 * ---	1-11	
X	WO 95 05184 A (GELTEX PHARMA INC) 23 February 1995 (1995-02-23) * claims 1-34 * * page 35, line 4 - line 22 * -----	1-11	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			A61K
INCOMPLETE SEARCH			
<p>The Search Division considers that the present application, or one or more of its claims, does/do not comply with the EPC to such an extent that a meaningful search into the state of the art cannot be carried out, or can only be carried out partially, for these claims.</p> <p>Claims searched completely :</p> <p>Claims searched incompletely :</p> <p>Claims not searched :</p> <p>Reason for the limitation of the search:</p> <p>see sheet C</p>			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
BERLIN		23 September 2003	Siatou, E
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

EPO FORM 1503 03/02 (P04C07)



European Patent
Office

INCOMPLETE SEARCH
SHEET C

Application Number
EP 02 02 5683

Claim(s) searched completely:
6

Claim(s) searched incompletely:
1-5 7-11

Reason for the limitation of the search:

Present claims 1-5, 7-11 relate to an extremely large number of possible tablets. Support within the meaning of Article 84 EPC and/or disclosure within the meaning of Article 83 EPC is to be found, however, for only a very small proportion of the tablets claimed. In the present case, the claims so lack support, and the application so lacks disclosure, that a meaningful search over the whole of the claimed scope is impossible.

Furthermore, present claims 1-11 relate to tablets defined (inter alia) by reference to the following parameter(s):

P1: hardness

P2: disintegration time

The use of these parameters in the present context is considered to lead to a lack of clarity within the meaning of Article 84 EPC. It is impossible to compare the parameters the applicant has chosen to employ with what is set out in the prior art. The lack of clarity is such as to render a meaningful complete search impossible.

Consequently, the search has been restricted those parts of the claims which appear to be supported and disclosed, namely those parts relating to tablets comprising the phosphate binding polymer of claim 6.

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 02 02 5683

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

23-09-2003

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82